



July 9, 2019

Councilmember Brenda Stonecipher
City of Everett
2930 Wetmore Ave.
Everett, WA 98201

SENT VIA E-MAIL

Dear Councilmember Stonecipher:

Thank you for reaching out on topics of great interest to the Port of Everett and our stakeholders. I appreciate this opportunity to correct some misinformation and keep you informed.

In looking through the lens of the future, the Port is working to deliver on a vision the citizens of Everett and the City have set for the Port to create a mixed-use, destination waterfront as part of a balanced waterfront that includes both a working waterfront and livable/recreation waterfront. This vision finds the Port amid a multi-year, multi-million-dollar effort to revitalize a community legacy contaminated site that is 65-acres of prime upland property at the center of the recreational waterfront, known as Waterfront Place.

The Port's on-going effort to bring this vision to reality has resulted in completion of a complex site-wide environmental cleanup to remediate historic contamination, bring the former brownfield site back to life and generate tax revenue to the City. Waterfront Place creates 18 acres of new public access, most of which is in place and other elements, including Pacific Rim Plaza and the expanded waterfront trail system to open in the coming weeks with Hotel Indigo. This effort has also attracted, and continues to attract, new business, job and tourism opportunities to the City as the anticipated \$500 million public-private investment continues forward.

While the Waterfront Place development enhances quality of life and livability in the City by creating a place where our citizens can live, work, play and thrive, it also inherently creates interim challenges, and frankly, some growing pains. Excitement surrounding the development has resulted in an exponential increase in site use and parking demand. Over the last couple of years, the Port has received ongoing complaints about the lack of parking management from a range of our site users – waterfront and Jetty Island visitors, event attendees, marina slipholders, boat launch users, on-site businesses and others. Many times, these constituencies are competing for parking.

To put this into perspective, I will use a Farmers Market day as an example of the challenges we face. On a typical Sunday, the Market, which was moved to a temporary location to accommodate the City's Grand Avenue Park Bridge project, attracts approximately 5,000 people in a six-hour period. There are about 300 visitor parking spaces near the Market that quickly fill to capacity. This limits access to other

waterfront amenities, and at times, creates long back-ups along West Marine View Drive while visitors circle the site to find parking.

The Everett Farmers Market is a wonderful attraction that the Port of Everett has fostered, supported and helped grow over the years. In the past five years with the Port's support, the Market has expanded from 36 to 167 vendors; only 100 can be accommodated each Sunday due to space constraints. We view it as a positive for the Market's success that they have out grown the waterfront location. The Port, Market and City are currently working in partnership to explore possible relocation opportunities downtown to accommodate the Sunday Market's growth, while featuring smaller scale pop-up markets at the waterfront.

We know parking management is not popular, but we have reached a point with the level of activity on the waterfront that it has become necessary. Parking management is a key component to the success of this mixed-use destination waterfront, and it is being implemented as required by the City and approved by the City Council as part of the City/Port Development Agreement for Waterfront Place.

The Port began collecting the special event parking fee in 2016 (currently \$2 per day, per car) for select events that generate a high parking impact in order to manage parking demand. While collection of the fee is not a new practice at the Port, the Everett Farmers Market, Fresh Paint Arts Festival and Music at the Marina have not collected the fee directly from parkers until this year because they did not have an efficient way to do so for their levels of attendance. Please note that the fee collection is not a new revenue source for the Port, and that the fee is waived during Farmers Market for those enrolled in WIC and food stamp programs. This is an important tool to regulate parking demand and encourage carpooling, use of rideshare and public transit to minimize the number of cars. Funds are only used to offset the cost of parking management and parking expenses (i.e. signage, maintenance, infrastructure).

While pay-to-park is a newer concept for some areas of the waterfront, it's not a new concept at Jetty Landing and Boat Launch. The site, which is jointly owned the Port, City and County, has had a \$3 seasonal parking fee (May 1 – Sept. 30) in effect since 2010. Pay-to-park is also not a new concept for downtown, where some lots assess fees at \$2 per hour or more on weekdays.

With regard to Port property tax collection, this is a valuable assessment used only to fund environmental restoration and public access (*2019 Port of Everett Citizen Budget Guide*, p. 11). Port property taxes make up 4.9% of the Port's \$102 million operating and capital budget (*2019 Port of Everett Citizen Budget Guide*, p. 3), and represents only 10% of the funding allocation for the Port's \$46 million environmental cleanup program (*2019 Port of Everett Citizen Budget Guide*, p. 10), which is an effort to clean up Everett's historic mill contamination. In addition, the Port has implemented or programmed \$26 million in public access enhancements from 2005 thru 2025.

The Port values its partnership with the City and other agencies as we all share the common goal of making our community a better place to live, work and play. In the future, please don't hesitate to reach out in advance so we can provide context behind our actions.

Sincerely,



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Port of Everett CEO/Executive Director

CC:

Mayor Cassie Franklin
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Chief of Staff Lyle Ryan
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Councilmember Jeff Moore
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